



House of Representatives

State of South Carolina

Murrell Smith

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Committees:

Judiciary
Criminal Laws
Subcommittee, Chairman

July 23, 2012

Governor Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
Post Office Box 12267
Columbia, SC 29211

RE: Order of The Palmetto Nomination for Fred Wesley

Dear Governor Haley:

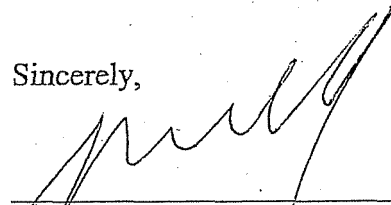
It is with great pleasure that I endorse the Nomination of Fred Wesley in being considered for the Order of the Palmetto. Mr. Wesley is a resident of Clarendon County which I have the pleasure of representing over the past 10 years. Not only is he a musical legend in Clarendon County, he is a legend throughout the State of South Carolina. As you can see, despite his world renowned success, he continues to give back to the State of South Carolina serving occasionally as an Artist in Residence at the University of South Carolina College of Music as well as an instructor, on occasions, at Charleston Southern University. He regularly performs community events and at church worship services throughout the State.

Clarendon County and the State of South Carolina is proud of Mr. Wesley's accomplishments. We feel that it would only be befitting that we recognize him with receiving the State's highest award for civilian service, The Order of the Palmetto.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

With kind regards, I remain

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G. Murrell Smith, Jr.', written over a horizontal line.

G. MURRELL SMITH, JR.

GMSjr:mln
Enc.



Lagree African Methodist Episcopal Church
2920 Kolb Road * Sumter, South Carolina 29154
(803) 481-0220 lagreeamec@yahoo.com



July 20, 2012

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley, Governor, *et al*
State of South Carolina
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

RE: Letter of Recommendation; Fred Wesley Order of the Palmetto Award Request

Greetings, Governor Haley:

On behalf of members, friends and related families of the Lagree African Methodist Episcopal Church in Sumter, South Carolina, I wish to commend to your favorable consideration an approval bestowal of the coveted award Order of the Palmetto upon most deserving state citizen, legendary international artisan, musician, master teacher and community servant Frederic Wesley of Manning South Carolina.

I have known Mr. Wesley as a worshipping parishioner, celebrity musician, businessman and fellow musician for the past fourteen years. Since becoming resident of Manning South Carolina in the year 1992, Mr. Wesley has continued to give of himself unselfishly, utilizing his iconic status as musician extraordinaire to teach, to inspire and to perform with faculty and students at local higher education institutions and community-base venues throughout the State. He continues to compose, to arrange and to perform chart-breaking pieces for some of America's top R&B, Hip-Hop and wrap artists today. His legendary notoriety in the music industry worldwide has brought and continues to bring much needed attention and improved business opportunity to the efforts of performing artists and formalized music study in South Carolina. He has been a humanitarian lending his artistic abilities and leadership skill liberally in support of ongoing efforts to improve quality of life conditions within communities statewide, to include civic and faith-based programs and events throughout the State.

I deem it an esteemed honor, privilege and of utmost necessity again to commend to your favorable consideration and approval the notable and exemplary lifelong accomplishments of this great resident South Carolinian Fred Wesley whom we in the community respect and appreciate dearly, because of his exceptional leading, unswerving and humble commitment to serving community. We want him to know that the State in which he has chosen to reside appropriately acknowledges, honors and deeply appreciates his positive impact which he continues to make on the quality of our living in South Carolina primarily through the performing arts by having bestowed upon him honors of The Order of the Palmetto. I hereby therefore request that the Order of the Palmetto be awarded to such a worthy nominee.

Governor Haley, we are respectfully requesting your response to this request in order that we may be able publicly to make The Award at the forthcoming Annual Gospel Instrumental Music Worship and Praise Service Saturday August 4, 2012, 4:00 PM at the Lagree AME Church in Sumter. And we request the honor of your presence, inviting you to assist us in making the bestowal and to enjoy the gospel songs of praise performed instrumentally by the gospel instrumental praise ensemble *The Peacemakers* and Mr. Fred Wesley, our honoree Trombonist himself as your schedule may permit.

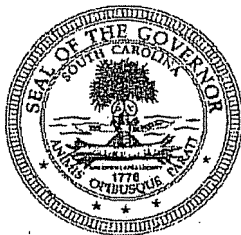
I can be contacted as needed at telephone number (803) 319-0125, e-mail address Omni-Source03@msn.com and/or US Postal mailing address 557 Innsbrook Drive; Columbia, South Carolina 29210-6911. I look forward to your response. Thanks.

In Christian Service,

Rev. Joseph B. Johnson, Jr.

Reverend Joseph B. Johnson, Jr.
Pastor, Lagree AME Church

JBj/kg



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

Application for Governor's Awards

Nominee's Name: Fredric Wesley

Nominee's Address: 53 West End Street; Manning, South Carolina 29102

Nominee's Cell Phone: 803-968-6092 Date of Birth: July 4, 1943

Award Sought: The Order of the Palmetto

Nominee's Accomplishments – Instructions: Please provide a thorough and detailed biographical statement on the Nominee's accomplishments. Please give examples of the Nominee's achievements where the Nominee has gone above and beyond his or her personal or professional responsibilities and has made a significant impact on the lives of South Carolinians. Please attach additional page(s) as needed.

As the longtime musical director for soul legend James Brown's renowned backing unit the J.B.'s, trombonist Fred Wesley was the world's most famous sideman, orchestrating and originating the bold, surgically precise solos that defined the language of funk. Born July 4, 1943, in Columbus, GA, Wesley was raised in Mobile, AL. At age three, he studied classical piano under his grandmother, a music teacher, but much preferred the big-band music played by his father, Fred Wesley, Sr., who also chaired the music department at Mobile Central High School. Wesley, Jr. remained with the piano until middle school, first adopting the trumpet before moving to the trombone. He made his professional debut at age 12 in a big band led by his school's music teacher, E.B. Coleman, and soon was sitting in with local R&B acts as well. While studying music at Alabama State University, Wesley briefly tenured with the Ike & Tina Turner Revue as well as Hank Ballard & the Midnighters before serving in the U.S. Army, playing with the 55th Army

Band and graduating from the Armed Forces School of Music. After returning from military duty in 1967, Wesley formed his own project, the Mastersound, fusing R&B with hard bop. The group splintered within a year, however, and when he received a phone call from J.B.'s trumpeter Waymon Reed, who told him Brown was seeking a new trombonist, Wesley accepted the offer.

Brown's infamously dictatorial approach wore greatly on Wesley, and the two men clashed often. After appearing on landmark singles including "Say It Loud (I'm Black and I'm Proud)," "Licking Stick," and "Mother Popcorn," the trombonist even quit the J.B.'s in late 1969, briefly gigging with Sam & the Goodtimers before returning to Brown's camp in early 1971 and assuming the role of musical director and arranger. Wesley's contributions to classic funk outings including Black Caesar, Slaughter's Big Rip-Off, and The Payback cannot be overstated: alongside bandmates including Maceo Parker and Bootsy Collins, he spearheaded Brown's groundbreaking transformation from soul to funk, establishing the template for the R&B of a new decade. "I completed [Brown's] creations, I followed his blueprints," Wesley later said. "He would give me horn things to write, but sometimes maybe it would be incoherent musically and I would have to straighten it out, so to speak. When it came out of my brain, it would be a lot of James Brown's ideas and my organization." Wesley even wrote a handful of Brown hits including "Doin' It to Death" and "Papa Don't Take No Mess," and headlined several J.B.'s records including the classic Damn Right I Am Somebody and Breakin' Bread. But creative and financial differences again forced him to part ways with Brown in 1975, this time for good.

Wesley signed on with George Clinton's Parliament-Funkadelic in time for their seminal Mothership Connection LP. And unlike Brown, Clinton encouraged his collaborators to pursue their own projects, even co-writing most of the songs comprising the trombonist's 1977 official solo debut, A Blow for Me, a Toot for You, credited to Fred Wesley & the Horny Horns. After a second solo disc, 1979's Say Blow by Blow Backwards, Wesley exited the P-Funk sphere to return to his first love: jazz. He joined the Count Basie Orchestra, and also moonlighted as a producer, helming the self-titled debut LP by R&B group Kameleon. After settling in Hollywood in 1981, Wesley assumed the role of hired gun, playing on studio sessions headlined by Earth, Wind & Fire, Barry White, and the Gap Band, and also arranged records by Curtis Mayfield and Terry Callier. He re-ignited his solo career with 1990's jazz date New Friends, and continued recording straight-ahead jazz LPs throughout the decade to follow. As his unmistakable syncopated style became a crucial component of hip-hop via endless sampling of his vintage James Brown sides, Wesley also toured with fellow Brown alums Maceo Parker and Pee Wee Ellis as the JB Horns before forming his own Fred Wesley Group in 1996. In 2002 he published his memoirs, *Hit Me, Fred: Recollections of a Sideman*. Wesley followed it with a new album, "With a Little Help from My Friends," in 2010 from BHM Records. He concurrently served as an adjunct professor of jazz studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Fred continues to impact the lives of South Carolinians through his legendary contributions to and iconic musical arrangements and soulful sounds made in the applied performing arts. He has been a resident of South Carolina for the past twenty (20) years, living in Manning, South Carolina. He serves occasionally as Artist in Residence at the University of South Carolina College of Music with command public faculty and student performances. Currently, in addition to his world stage touring performances, playing ovations before thousands, Mr. Wesley is distinguished artist, and master instructor serving as lead trombonist on The Mark Sterbank Group Hymns and Spirituals gospel instrumental jazz ensemble at Charleston Southern University. He regularly performs at community events and church worship services throughout the community of South Carolina. He and his wife Anna are actively faithful members of the Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church in Manning.

***The Order of the Palmetto is a once in a lifetime achievement. Previous recipients are not eligible. ***

Nominator's Information

Name: Rev. Joseph B. Johnson, Jr.

Address: 557 Innsbrook Drive; Columbia, South Carolina 29210

Telephone Numbers: Cell: (803) 319-0125 Work: (803) 481-0220

Signature: **Rev. Joseph B. Johnson, Jr.**

Please list the name of all co-endorsers who will provide a letter of recommendation.

Name: Rev. Joseph B. Johnson, Jr., Pastor of the Lagree AME Church - Sumter, SC; SC House

Representative Murrell Smith

Orders of the Palmetto require a recommendation from at least one member of the corresponding delegation of the Nominee. Please be sure to provide this letter of recommendation along with the application.

Please identify date/event for

presentation of this award: Saturday, August 4, 2012, 4:00 PM/ The Lagree AME Church
Annual Gospel Instrumental Worship & Praise Service; 2920 Kolb
Road; Sumter, SC 29154

Applications should be received no later than 60 days prior to requested date.

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